

**Bilateral Schedule between the Department for Child
Protection and Family Support, Western Australia Police and
Not for Profit Organisations**

For the management and delivery of the Family and Domestic
Violence Response Teams

2013

1. INTRODUCTION

This schedule formalises the partnership between the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Western Australia Police and not for profit organisations funded to deliver the Family and Domestic Violence Coordinated Response Services in the delivery of the *Family and Domestic Violence Response Teams*.

The Family and Domestic Violence Response Team is a collaborative inter-agency response to people experiencing family and domestic violence as identified by Western Australia Police. The interagency approach involves joint assessment, triage and coordinated responses between agencies.

The Family and Domestic Violence Response Team aims to improve the safety of child and adult victims by providing/supporting:

- joint risk assessments using a common framework informed by police, child protection and specialist family violence workers;
- identification of opportunities to intervene early with families experiencing family and domestic violence;
- timely responses following a police call out;
- responses targeted to client need, identified risk and unique case circumstances;
- supported and streamlined client pathways through the service system;
- coordinated responses between partner agencies; and
- multi-agency safety planning on a needs basis with agencies and organisations in the community that have a role in responding to family and domestic violence.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this schedule, the following definitions apply:

Child - a child as defined in section 3 of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*.

At risk - a person whose current circumstances could adversely affect their life, safety, wellbeing, recovery or development.

Early intervention - to provide services to prevent further violence, harm or escalation of risk. Increasing safety through mitigation of risk and prevention of further harm will reduce the likelihood of child protection intervention.

Integrated or collaborative response - a partnership approach between services/agencies to share responsibility for cases and work collaboratively towards a common goal.

Joint assessment - a process for assessment that includes: all parties contributing information about the individual's or family's history with the respective service/agency; shared responsibility for the analysis of information; and joint decision making in regards to the assessment outcome.

Triage - a process for determining, through joint assessment, the agency that is best placed to provide a response.

Sharing resources - sharing office equipment, vehicles and other resources allocated for use by the parties under this schedule.

Schedule/agreement - used interchangeably to represent the formalised partnership as outlined by this document.

Co-location – all parties physically located at the same premises. The site of co-location, usually a police station, is the primary workplace of all parties.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE SCHEDULE

The objective of the schedule is to formalise the Family and Domestic Violence Response Team partnership between WA Police, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support (CPFS) and not for profit organisations and to ensure the long term and ongoing commitment of the parties to a joint collaborative approach to early intervention in cases of family and domestic violence. This will be achieved through sharing information, sharing resources and collaborative processes for assessment and response.

4. PRINCIPLES

The parties agree that the following principles underpin the Family and Domestic Violence Response Team:

- Children exposed to family and domestic violence are at risk of physical, emotional and psychological harm.
- The safety of child and adult victims is paramount and is the primary focus of the Family and Domestic Violence Response Team.
- Safety for child and adult victims is best achieved by managing risk associated with the perpetrator.
- Perpetrator accountability and risk management is most effective in a coordinated and collaborative systems response.

5. OPERATING PROVISIONS

5.1 Parties to the Agreement

This schedule is made between CPFS and WA Police. CPFS provide signatory on behalf of employees as well as the CPFS funded *Family and Domestic Violence Coordinated Response Service*.

5.2 Legislation

The guidelines outlined in this schedule are subject to any relevant legislation enacted by the Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Western Australia.

5.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Each party will remain responsible for their agency role and mandate and will be respectful of others role and mandate in implementing the agreement.

All parties will co-operate in the ongoing management of family and domestic violence where individuals and families have been identified as being at risk. Each party will advise the other of any actions, decisions or issues likely to impact on the other party's area of responsibility.

5.4 Information Exchange

The parties will exchange information in relation to families with children and individuals.

Relevant information is defined as any information that informs or relates to an understanding of risk or safety for an adult or child who is a victim or perpetrator of family and domestic violence.

Information will be exchanged within the provisions of current legislation permitting information sharing between authorised persons and the not for profit sector, including:

- *Children and Community Services Act (2004), Part 3, s23 and 24A;* and
- *Restraining Orders Act (1997), s70A.*

Information provided and received by each party will be deemed an official record and will be incorporated into respective information systems in either electronic or hard copy format.

See Appendix 1 for guidelines about the electronic delivery of information through the interface of CPFS Assist and WA Police Incident Management System.

Disclaimer: While the parties to this agreement will supply information in good faith, they do not guarantee the accuracy of the information.

5.5 Procedures

All parties will participate in joint assessment and triage of Domestic Violence Incident Reports referred to the Family and Domestic Violence Response Team. The purpose of assessment and triage will be to determine the risks posed to the adult and/or child victims and to identify the most appropriate service/s to provide a timely response in collaboration with other services.

All parties agree to operate in line with the following documents:

- *Family and Domestic Violence Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework;* and
- *Family and Domestic Violence Response Team: Operating Procedures.*

5.6 Co-location

All parties agree that the physical co-location of the Family and Domestic Violence Response Team is preferred where adequate space/accommodations are available.

5.7 Vacancy Management

All parties agree to ensure that staff vacancies due to leave or other reasons will be filled or their duties covered, as far as is practicable.

5.8 Dispute Resolution

Parties to this schedule agree that in the first instance, any dispute arising from the implementation and delivery of the schedule will be negotiated at the lowest and most informal level practicable.

Failing resolution at this level, the dispute is to be documented and referred to District management level of all parties.

5.9 Costs

The parties agree to bear their own costs (if any) arising out of this agreement.

5.10 Timeframe and Review

This agreement will be reviewed 24 months from the date of signing, unless requested earlier in writing by parties. The agreement will continue to be effective until all parties endorse a revised schedule.

6. ENDORSEMENT

This document has been developed in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration to strengthen the partnership between the agencies and is entered into with the mutual understanding that it is a voluntary working agreement and not legally binding.



**KAY BENHAM
ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT FOR CHILD PROTECTION
AND FAMILY SUPPORT**

DATE: 5 November 2013



**KARL O'CALLAGHAN APM
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE**

DATE: 9-12-13

APPENDIX 1

Interface of CPFS Assist and WA Police Incident Management System

The interface of CPFS Assist and WA Police Incident Management System (IMS) provides for the electronic delivery of *Domestic Violence Incident Reports* (DVIR) to a triage system. The triage system is accessible by CPFS and not for profit services funded to deliver the Family and Domestic Violence Coordinated Response Service.

CPFS staff can view DVIRs and edit and send them to Assist to populate a duty interaction.

Coordinated Response Services can view and print the DVIRs.

Outlined below are the conditions of use for CPFS and Coordinated Response Service staff.

CPFS

In each district the following positions will have access to the triage system:

- District Director;
- Assistant District Director;
- Senior Child Protection Worker - Family and Domestic Violence;
- Team Leaders Child Protection (including duty and intake, assessment and investigations and children and young people in care); and
- Assist mentors (where relevant).

District Directors will also have discretion to nominate additional officers' to access the triage system. Access should be granted to staff in the following circumstances:

- to support the assessment and response to families identified in DVIRs; and
- to reduce unnecessary s23 requests e.g., to prevent (or reduce) requests for information from WA Police that the organisation already holds.

Coordinated Response Services

The triage system is for the Coordinated Response Service. The provisions of this schedule including access to the triage system do not extend to other services or functions of the auspice agency.